

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GENEVA 11571 271530Z
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INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL

C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 11571

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ILC
SUBJECT: INTERNAL AFGHAN SITUATION: TABIBI'S COMMENTS

1. ABDUL HAKIM TABIBI, FORMER MINISTER OF JUSTICE OF AFGHANISTAN AND FORMER AFGHAN AMBASSADOR TO BELGRADE AND TOKYO AND FORMER MEMBER OF AFGHAN MISSION TO UNITED NATIONS IN NY, MADE FOLLOWING COMMENTS TO DEPUTY LEGAL ADVISER SCHWEBEL IN COURSE OF CURRENT SESSION OF UN INTERNATIONAL LAW COMMISSION WHICH WILL CLOSE JULY 28 IN GENEVA. TABIBI WAS ABLE TO LEAVE KABUL AFTER COUP IN ORDER TO ATTEND THE COMMISSION'S SESSION; HIS WIFE WAS PERMITTED TO JOIN HIM SOME WEEKS THEREAFTER. TWO OF HIS CHILDREN ARE CURRENTLY IN U.S.

2. TABIBI CLAIMED THAT HE HAD WARNED BOTH AMBASSADOR ELIOT AND IRANIAN INTELLIGENCE BEFORE COUP THAT COUP WAS COMING BUT GATHERED THAT HIS WARNING WAS NOT TAKEN SERIOUSLY.

3. TABIBI REMARKED THAT MARSHAL TITO HAD TOLD TABIBI IN BELGRADE YEARS AGO THAT THE MAN WHO CURRENTLY HAPPENS TO SERVE AS SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN KABUL IS A "POLICEMAN", I.E. KGB OPERATIVE. TABIBI DESCRIBED HIM AS A TOUGH
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PAGE 02 GENEVA 11571 271530Z

CUSTOMER.

4. TABIBI STATED THAT, BEFORE HIS POST-COUP DEPARTURE, SOVIET AIRPLANES WERE LANDING INTENSIVELY IN KABUL AND THAT SOVIET ADVISERS WERE BEING BROUGHT IN. NEVERTHELESS, HE BELIEVED THAT THE MOST MILITANT PRO-SOVIET EXTREMISTS WOULD COME TO THE FORE LATER; FOR THE TIME BEING, THEIR

ROLE WOULD BE MUTED. THE NEW REGIME IS SO UNPOPULAR THAT CHILDREN OF THE NEW RULERS DARE NOT TO GO TO SCHOOL.

5. SOVIET INFLUENCE IS VERY STRONG. THE NEW AFGHAN RULERS HAD SIGNED 16 TREATIES PREPARED IN MOSCOW WHICH THEY BARELY HAD TIME TO READ. THIS SOVIET INFLUENCE IS STRONGER THAN PUBLICLY MANIFESTED. ITS ESSENTIAL DESIGN IS TO PUSH SOVIET POWER THROUGH AFGHANISTAN DOWN TO THE INDIAN OCEAN.

6. TABIBI HINTED BROADLY THAT HE KNOWS A GREAT DEAL ABOUT AFGHANISTAN AND THE PERSONALITIES OF SOME OF THOSE NOW IN POWER AND WOULD WELCOME BEING INTERVIEWED BY APPROPRIATE USG PERSONNEL. HE IS SEEKING AN EXTENSION OF HIS WIFE'S VISA TO ENTER U.S. IT IS BELIEVED HE WILL REMAIN IN GENEVA FOR A WHILE LONGER SINCE HE HAS BEEN NAMED COMMISSION'S OBSERVER AT UN CONFERENCE ON RACIAL DISCRIMINATION. HE PROBABLY COULD BE REACHED IN THE NEXT WEEK OR TWO THROUGH UN SECRETARIAT HANDLING COMMISSION (LARRY JOHNSON).

7. SCWEBEL'S COMMENT. I HAVE KNOWN TABIBI SUPERFICIALLY SINCE 1961. IN SIXTIES, IN UNGA, TABIBI PANDERED TO USSR. MORE LATELY, HE HAS PROFESSED TO HAVE ANTI-SOVIET OUTLOOK. TABIBI IS AMIABLE, WARMHEARTED AND FRIENDLY. HE IS NOT MUCH OF AN INTELLECT OR INTERNATIONAL LAWYER. MY INSTINCT IS NOT TO PLACE GREAT TRUST IN TABIBI;
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PAGE 03 GENEVA 11571 271530Z

HE IS A LIGHTWEIGHT WHO LONGS TO MAKE HEAVY SPLASHES. BUT HE MAY WELL KNOW A GOOD DEAL ABOUT THINGS AFGHANI.
VANDEN HEUVEL

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